

III. Amendments to the Drawings

Replacement sheet 2 of 3 of the drawings, which includes changes to Figure 2, is attached.

Specifically, Figure 2 was amended by adding reference symbol “D” for the internal diameter of the gas deflector, and reference symbol “d” for the external diameter of the gas generator. This amendment was in response to an objection that the drawings must be amended to show the features of claim 8, which now recites that the gas generator has an external diameter corresponding to the internal diameter of the terminal portions of the gas deflector. Accordingly, Applicants believe that the amendments to both claim 8 and the drawings have cured the respective objection.

IV. Remarks

Claims 1-11 were pending in this application and have been rejected. The present amendment cancels claims 2-3 and 9-10, adds new claim 12 and amends claims 1, 4-8 and 11 to more particularly point out and clarify Applicants' invention. No new matter has been added by the present amendment. After this amendment, claims 1, 4-8 and 11-12 will be pending.

Reconsideration of the application in view of the present amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Claim Objections

Claims 9 and 10 were objected to because of certain informalities. Claims 9 and 10 have been cancelled and therefore, the objections to claims 9 and 10 are now moot.

Rejection Under 35 USC § 112

Claims 5-7, 9 and 11 were rejected under 35 USC §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regards as their invention. Claim 9 has been cancelled and therefore, the rejection of claim 9 is now moot. In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejections of claims 5-7 and 11 are traversed.

Claim 5 has been amended to recite that the formation extends radially outwardly to form a shape that corresponds to a bridge with the first and second apertures being defined underneath the bridge. The amendment was in response to an objection that the term “bridge-like” is inherently unclear due to the term “like”.

Claim 6 has been amended to recite that the outwardly extending formation has a first portion and a second portion. This amendment was in response to an objection that “section” portion was unclear.

Claim 7 has been amended to recite that “one end of the formation defining the one of first and second apertures with the greater cross-sectional area and the other end of the formation defining the other of the first and second apertures with the smaller cross-sectional area”. This amendment was in response to an objection that “relatively large” and “relatively small” in claim 7 was unclear if these terms related to different terms used in claim 4 of “greater cross-sectional area”.

Claim 11 has been amended to recite that “part of the air-bag is clamped to an exterior of the tubular hollow housing to obstruct the gas from flowing directly between the two internal chambers”. This amendment was in response to an objection that “the airbag is not clamped to the gas generator but to the deflector” and “it is impossible to consider the clamp to substantially seal the chambers from each other”.

Accordingly, Applicants believe that the above amendments have cured the 35 USC §112, second paragraph rejections of claims 5-7 and 11.

Rejection Under 35 USC § 102

Claims 1 and 5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by WO 03/059690 ("WO '690"). In view of the amendments and remarks contained herein, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejections of claims 1 and 5 are traversed.

Claim 1 has been amended to recite that the air-bag has two internal chambers formed therein. The gas generator has a first mounting stud. The gas deflector is provided with a second mounting stud. Part of one end region of the tubular hollow housing of the gas deflector is cut away to receive the first mounting stud of the gas generator. The gas deflector is configured to be positioned in the air-bag and one of the first and second apertures is for direct fluid communication with one of the internal chambers and the other of the first and second apertures is for direct fluid communication with the other of the internal chambers. Support for this amendment may be found in paragraphs [0014] and [0024], and Figure 1.

WO '690 discloses a gas flow distributor including a receiving element 1 that surrounds a gas generator. The gas flow distributor is used to distribute gas from the gas generator via outflow openings 14a and 14b for inflating the airbag. WO '690 at Abstract. As illustrated in Figure 3, the receiving element 1 does not have a mounting stud and there is no disclosure that the gas generator has a mounting stud. Moreover, WO '690 fails to disclose the airbag having multiple internal chambers and that the receiving element 1 is configured with the outflow opening 14a being in direct fluid communication with one internal chamber and the other outflow opening 14b being in direct fluid communication with a separate internal chamber.

This is unlike Applicants' invention where (1) the air-bag has two internal chambers formed therein, (2) the gas generator has a first mounting stud, (3) the gas deflector is provided with a second mounting stud, (4) part of one end region of the tubular hollow housing is cut away to receive the first mounting stud of the gas generator, and (5) the gas deflector is configured to be positioned in the air-bag and one of the first and second apertures is for direct fluid communication with one of the internal chambers and the other of the first and second apertures is for direct fluid communication with the other of the internal chambers. Accordingly, Applicants believe that the rejections of claims 1 and 5 are improper and should be withdrawn.

Claims 1, 3, 5 and 8-9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Pat. No. 5,340,147 issued to Fontecchio, et al. ("Fontecchio"). In view of the amendments and remarks contained herein, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejections of claims 1, 3, 5 and 8-9 are traversed.

Fontecchio discloses an inflator 20 for providing inflation gas. The inflator 20 has a cylindrical body 44 with exhaust ports 42a and 42b located on its wall for allowing inflation gas to exit. The inflator 20 is secured in a retainer 140 which includes a hollow cylindrical retainer body that diverts the inflation gas stream into a diffuser 210. The diffuser 210 uniformly distributes the gas stream to the air-bag. *Fontecchio* at Abstract. As illustrated in Figure 12, the retainer 140 includes louvers 122a and 122b with corresponding apertures 110a and 110c. Notably, however, the openings 110a and 110c direct the inflation gas stream in a direction 200 which is transverse to the longitudinal axis of the retainer 140. Moreover and as illustrated in Figures 11-12 and 15-16, the retainer 140 does not have any mounting studs but rather has holes for receiving the mounting studs 158a of the gas generator. Furthermore, Fontecchio fails

to disclose the air-bag having multiple internal chambers and that the retainer 140 is configured to be positioned in the air-bag with the opening 110a and 110c each in direct fluid communication with one of differing internal chambers of the air-bag.

This is unlike Applicants' invention where (1) the air-bag has two internal chambers formed therein, (2) the gas deflector is provided with a mounting stud, (3) the gas deflector is configured to be positioned in the air-bag and one of the first and second apertures is for direct fluid communication with one of the internal chambers and the other of the first and second apertures is for direct fluid communication with the other of the internal chambers, and (4) the first and second apertures of the tubular hollow housing through which gas from the gas generator may flow in a direction substantially parallel to the longitudinal axis of the tubular hollow housing. Therefore, Applicants believe that the rejections of claims 1, 3, 5 and 8-9 are improper and should be withdrawn. Accordingly, Applicants believe that claims 1, 3, 5 and 8-9 are in condition for allowance.

Rejections Under 35 USC § 103

Claim 2 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over WO '690 in view of U.S. Pat. No. 5,918,898 issued to Wallner. Claim 2 has been canceled by the present amendment and therefore, the rejection of claim 2 is now moot.

Claims 4 and 6-7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over WO '690 in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2004/0232664 issued to Tokunaga, et al. ("Tokunaga"). In view of the amendments and remarks contained

herein, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejections of claims 4 and 6-7 are traversed.

Tokunaga discloses an air-bag 11 having a gas supply port 11a formed in a longitudinally mid-portion of the air-bag 11. The gas supply port 11a supplies gas from an inflator 22 to a gas passage 11b which extends in the longitudinal direction of the air-bag 11 below the gas supply port 11a. The gas passage 11b communicates gas to both the front seat inflatable portion 11c and the rear seat inflatable portion 11d of the air-bag. The inflator 22 supplies the gas to the gas supply port 11a via a diffuser 21. The diffuser 21 includes front and rear gas feed holes 21b and 21c formed in the lower wall of the front end portion of the diffuser 21 which face the gas supply port 11a of the air-bag body 11. The front gas feed hole 21b has a relatively large size than the rear gas feed hole 21c. *Tokunaga* at paragraphs [0030]-[0035]. Notably, gas from the inflator 22 is supplied through the gas feed holes 21b and 21c into the gas supply port 11a at angles θ_f and θ_r to the longitudinal axis of the diffuser 21. The gas supply port 11a then supplies the gas to the gas passage 11b. From the gas passage 11b, gas is supplied to the front seat and rear seat inflatable portions 11c and 11d of the air-bag. Thus, the front seat and rear seat inflatable portions 11c and 11d of the air-bag receive gas directly from the gas passage 11b and not directly from the front and rear gas feed holes 21b and 21c of the diffuser 21, respectively.

Neither WO '690 nor Tokunaga independently or in combination disclose, teach or suggest the present invention as recited in claim 1. More specifically, neither WO '690 nor Tokunaga disclose, teach or suggest a gas deflector configured to be positioned in the air-bag and one of the first and second apertures is for direct fluid communication with one of the internal chambers and the other of the first and second

apertures is for direct fluid communication with the other of the internal chambers. In that both WO '690 and Tokunaga lack the noted elements of claim 1 and since claims 4 and 6-7 depend from claim 1, the rejections based thereon should be withdrawn. Accordingly, Applicants believe that claims 4 and 6-7 are in condition for allowance.

Claims 10 and 11 were rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Fontecchio in view of Tokunaga. Claim 10 has been cancelled by the present amendment and therefore, the rejection of claim 10 is now moot. In view of the amendments and remarks contained herein, applicants respectfully submit that the rejection of claim 11 is traversed.

Neither Fontecchio nor Tokunaga independently or in combination disclose, teach or suggest the present invention as recited in claim 1. Specifically, neither Fontecchio nor Tokunaga disclose, teach, or suggest the gas deflector configured to be positioned in an air-bag and one of the first and second apertures is for direct fluid communication with one of the internal chambers and the other of the first and second apertures is for direct fluid communication with the other of the internal chambers. Moreover, neither Fontecchio nor Tokunaga disclose, teach, or suggest the first and second apertures of the tubular hollow housing through which gas from the gas generator may flow in a direction substantially parallel to the longitudinal axis of the tubular hollow housing. In that both Fontecchio and Tokunaga lack noted elements of claim 1 and since claim 11 depends from claim 1, the rejection based thereon should be withdrawn. Accordingly, Applicants believe that claim 11 is in condition for allowance.

Claim 12 is also believed to be allowable since it depends from claim 1 and also for its own specific elements recited therein.

Conclusion

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the present form of the claims are patentable distinguishable over the art of record and that this application is now in condition for allowance. Such action is requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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